

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

Engineering Department — Lines West

Room 306 King Street Station
303 South Jackson Street
Seattle, Washington 98104

L. G. REICHERT,
Asst. Chief Engineer

September 20, 1965

File No. _____
8741-6

District Engineer
U. S. Army Engineer District
Corps of Engineers
1519 Alaskan Way South
Seattle, Washington 98104

Dear Sir:

Please refer to our letter of **May 12, 1961**, in which we made application to the Corps of Engineers to have the swing span in Great Northern Railway Company Bridge No. 36, over the Skagit River, near Mount Vernon, Washington, declared a fixed span. At the same time that we made our application, the owners of other bridges downstream on the Skagit River also requested that the swing spans in their bridges be made fixed.

In your letter of August 1, 1961, you state that you were deferring action on our application until completion of a study of the feasibility of extending navigation on the Skagit River from tidewater to the town of Concrete. You also stated that as a result of the public notice you received nine letters of objection to the proposal that the several bridges over the lower Skagit have their swing spans made fixed.

We can understand why there would be objections to having swing spans made fixed in those bridges in the City of Mount Vernon and downstream; but we do not believe there can be valid objection to having the swing span in our bridge made fixed in view of the following facts:

1. The highway bridge carrying U. S. Highway #5 (Interstate) downstream from the Great Northern Bridge is fixed and has but slightly better clearance than the Great Northern Bridge.
2. The Great Northern Bridge, in closed position, has substantial clearance to the water surface, the bottom of low steel is Elevation 43.1, and the elevation of water surface for the mean discharge (16,260 cfs) for the years 1940 to 1959 is Elevation 16.0. (Elevations are Army Engineers Data.)

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3. The Bridge has not been opened for commercial river traffic since September 9, 1959.

We are, at the present time, faced with two expensive items of maintenance which we could avoid if permitted to make the swing span a fixed span: 1) the engine and part of the turning mechanism and machinery are obsolete and we can no longer obtain spare parts for the engine, 2) the rock-filled crib at the upstream end of the draw rest is decaying and should be repaired or replaced at a cost of several thousand dollars.

In view of the above facts, the Great Northern Railway Company is again making application to have the Railway Company's Bridge No. 36, over the Skagit River, declared a fixed span and that the Skagit River be designated as non-navigable upstream from and including the above bridge for all vessels requiring more vertical clearance than that provided by the bridge in closed position.

Yours very truly,

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

Assistant Chief Engineer

CFI/jr

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